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Notes of Fort Monckton.

COMPILED BY

E. T. P. SHEWEN, M. CAN. SOC. C. E.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS, *

Among the documents at the Ministry of Marine in Paris, catalogued by the Dominion Archivist, is a memorial dated 1686 relating to "Beaubassin, or Chignecto and Baie Verte." The contents are not given, but this early reference to Baie Verte, and since Beaubassin is coupled with it, inferentially to the route across the isthmus afterwards so much used for military purposes, is worthy of note.

In the same collection is found a letter dated Quebec, 22nd September, 1692 from d'Iberville, captain of *Le Poli*, who had sailed from Rochelle in April, saying that he brought to Baie Verte provisions for de Villebon, the commanding officer in Acadia. The latter had been sent out from France in 1691 as Governor of Annapolis, then Port Royal, in succession to Menneval, who had surrendered to Phipps in the previous year. At the time d'Iberville wrote from Quebec, or shortly before, de Villebon, having retaken the seat of his government, from the chief sergeant (i. e. major) left there by Phipps, was engaged in operations against some small forts near Boston. He certainly does not appear, by his despatches, to have been at that period in the neighborhood of Baie Verte; hence although there is no positive statement that the stores left there for his use were transported by land to Beaubassin, it is possible that they were taken by that route to Annapolis.

It will be mentioned later, that the road from Fort Beausejour to Fort Gaspereau, was constructed in 1754, but it has been suggested by good authority that the work then done may have consisted in widening and making practicable for vehicles, an existing bridle-path; as it long before had been customary to drive cattle across from the Bay of Fundy for shipment at Bay Verte, and as it is recorded that about 1746 the Bishop of Quebec made the journey on horseback. Colonel Morse of the Royal Engineers reported in 1784: "There is a road from Cumberland to Baie Verre, still passable, though it has been long neglected, and in some places broken up, but in the time of the French was much used, and grain carried to Baie Verte for exportation, quantities of which were sent to Canada."

1892

In 1744 the unsuccessful expedition sent from Louisburg against Annapolis landed at Baie Verte. In May 1746 Governor Shirley called attention to the necessity for watching Baie Verte and Chignecto, repeating the warning in November of that year. Shirley's foresight can be recognized, when it is remembered that on the 8th of January, 1747, the expedition so fatal to Colonel Noble's detachment at Minas, set out from Beaubassin. In the following June, one Moses Bennett furnished the English Government with a list of French ships then at Baie Verte, where de Ramezay was strongly posted, with the design, it was supposed, of attacking Annapolis. Notwithstanding the occasional use of Baie Verte as a naval station and a depot for provisions, no regular entrenchments appear to have been made there up to that time; and in fact the more important settlement of Beaubassin was then without defensive works, though they were soon to follow.

Considered strategically, the isthmus of Chignecto has been, and ever will be, of the utmost importance. The part played in the last century by the waters of the Missiquash, and the Mic-Mac portage, or later by the French Road, will, in the warfare of the future, be undertaken by the Ship Railway and the Cape Tormentine Railway. Traces of that portage were seen near the head of the river, many years ago, by Mr. Munro, the veteran Crown Land Surveyor, and Civil Engineer, who describes it as being about ten feet wide, and hollowed to trough shape by wear. Doubtless their first efforts in the direction of roadmaking, were applied by the French to the improvement of the two miles of portage, at the beginning of which indeed, remains of an old Acadian settlement may yet be seen. Until transcripts are made of the French Archives relating to Acadia, the earlier history of Chignecto cannot be told, but the glimpse afforded by the précis of them, furnished by the Department of Agriculture, indicates that it is full of incident and interest.

The establishment in 1749, by De La Corne, of the French military post which developed into Fort Beausejour, on the south side of the Isthmus of Chignecto, was immediately followed by the erection of Fort Lawrence, 2 miles distant, on the British side of the Missiquash. The Acadians apparently were not actively hostile to the measure, for on Sept. 27th, 1753, M. Prevost, Comptroller of Louisburg, informed the French Minister of War that the English had disembarked 2,000 men at Beaubassin to form a settlement there, and that the Indians desired to disturb them, but that the Acadians refused to do so, preferring to retire to the woods, pending the settlement of the boundary question. In fact it appears they were inclined to preserve peace upon the Isthmus, for in the following November they stated to the Governor of Louisburg that Fort Lawrence was of little importance; and the French despatches of June 1751 report their continued resistance to Le Loutre's efforts to transplant them to the Island of St. John, "because they await a settlement of the boundaries."

This demonstration of the English was regarded otherwise by Le Loutre, who, recognizing the importance of maintaining communication between the fertile Acadian settlements of the Bay of Fundy and the fortresses of Quebec and Louisburg, urged the instant necessity of building regular works at Beausejour and also at Gaspereau River in Baie Verte, with storehouses and magazines at the latter place. A letter from him dated 1750 states that 40 families were already settled about Gaspereau, and that he expected an addition of 60 in the spring from Beaubassin.

His representations were evidently forcible, for preparations were at once made to found Fort Beausejour, and in the same year, intelligence was received at Halifax, that the actual construction of Fort Gaspereau had been commenced. Almost simultaneously, news arrived there of the capture in Baie Verte of the French sloop *Louison*, 70 tons, laden with arms, ammunition and stores for the new fort, by Captain Le Cras of the *Trial*.

A letter from M. de St. Ours Dechaillon, commanding the posts of Acadia, dated Aulac, 8th May, 1751, says that he has made it his duty to build two forts, one at Point Beausejour, the other at Baie Verte, where he will wait for all his reinforcements. The same letter refers to the shipwreck of an English vessel near *Oueskak*, the crew of which had been protected by the French from Indian outrage. Another, dated Louisburg, 29th June, states that it is necessary that M. de la Clue should go to Baie Verte, in order to convoy there the ships which should go thence to Canada; presumably with provisions for the garrison of Quebec.

Fort Gaspereau, now Fort Monckton, is placed upon a point of land only a few feet above tide, at the mouth of the Gaspereau, two miles from the village of Baie Verte. It originally was a palisaded earthwork, 180 feet square, surrounded by a ditch 7 or 8 feet deep, and flanked by blockhouses at the angles. The fort mounted eight guns, and contained besides storehouses, barracks for 200 men. The buildings have disappeared, but traces of their foundations may be discerned. The ditch and parapet, although in imminent danger of being destroyed by the sea, are yet in tolerable preservation. Only a few French soldiers were usually stationed there, the actual garrison in emergency being the inhabitants of the village and the neighborhood, who, regularly drilled and armed as a militia force, were under orders to muster at the fort upon a given signal.

In November, 1751, it was reported at Louisburg that all was quiet at Forts Beausejour and Gaspereau; but in December the garrison of Fort Lawrence complained that the French commander had excited the hostile spirit of the Indians. In the following November, the French garrisons of the Isthmus had been re-inforced by a company from Louisburg. In May, 1753, Antony Castile, the sole survivor of a party of white men attacked at Jeddore by the Indians, was brought by them a prisoner to Fort Gaspereau, and detained for a month until ransomed.

In the spring of 1754 the fort was strengthened and a road 15 miles in length made to Beausejour. Some of the piles then driven to carry a plank roadway across the marsh to Baie Verte, are still sound beneath the surface. So busily occupied were the French and Indians in this undertaking, that the English garrison of Fort Lawrence enjoyed comparative peace during its progress.

Early in 1755, Shirley, Governor of New England, raised a regiment of two battalions, each 1000 strong, for the reduction of Beausejour and Gaspereau. The command of the expedition was given to Colonel Robert Monckton, who afterwards distinguished himself by capturing the Island of Martinique at the head of eleven battalions from New York. Shirley's men were enlisted for a term not exceeding one year, receiving ten pounds bounty, and pay at the rate of regular soldiers. The first and second battalions were commanded respectively by Lieut. Cols. Winslow and Scott. Winslow's list of officers is here appended. The whole were embarked in the following transports, and the expedition, under convoy of three ships of the Royal Navy, left Boston on 23rd May, 1755.

OFFICERS OF GOVERNOR SHIRLEY'S REGIMENT.

FIRST BATTALION (Colonel Winslow's.)

Field Officers.	Captain.	Lieutenants	Lieutenants.	Ensigns.
His Ex. the Gov.	John Malcolm		John Butler	Jona. Brewer
J. Winslow, L.-Col	John Winslow	John Thomas	Gam'l. Bradford	Jotham Gay
Jed. Preble, M'jr.	Major Preble	Israel Herrick	Josh. Vaughan	Paul Pritchard
Benj. Goldthwait, Major	M'jr. Goldthwait	Eben. Marrow	Thos. Lane,	Nath. Barrell
	Nathan Adams	Jonas Fitch	Wm. Peabody	James Par
	Humpy. Hobbs	Thos. Lawrence	Job. Crooker	Benj. Fassett
	Thos. Cobb	Jos. Wilson,	Jona. Carver	Thos. Cobb, Jr
	Phineas Osgood	Charles Buckley	Timo. Wheeler	Jere Bancroft
	Wm Lamson	Miles Witworth	Timo. Northam	John Grant
	Thos. Speakman	Job Winslow	Tapley	Josiah Willis
	Jos. Stertervant	Sam'l Bent.	Moses Curtis.	Eph. Holmes.

STAFF OFFICERS: John Phillips, Chaplain; Miles Witworth, Surgeon; John Thomas, do mate; — Bridge Quarter-Master; Saml. Canixeda, Adjutant.

OFFICERS OF SECOND BATTALION (Colonel Scott's.)

Field Officers.	Captains.	Lieuts.	Lieuts.	Ensigns.
Geo. Scott, L.-Col	Col. Scott			
Jos. Frye, Major	Major Frye	John Indicott	Asa Foster	Thos. Hildreth
Jere Bourn, M'jr	Major Bourn	— Campbell	— Lawrence	David Gorham
	Phin. Stephens	— Alexander	Oliver Noyce	— Jude
	Wm. Briatnall	— Dixon	— Cone	—
	Nathl. Perry	Jacob March	Henry Y. Brown	—
	Enoch Bayley	Robert Fletcher	— Trumball	David Day
	— Willard	— Haskal	— Willard	— Willard
	Ephraim Jones	Wm. Prescot	Josiah Winslow	— Armstrong
	Saml. Gilbert.	— Fuller.	Timo. Brown	Joshua Lock

STAFF OFFICERS: Philip Godfrey, Cast Surgeon; Jacob March and Cornelius Nye, Surgeon's Mates; Philip Godfrey, Cast Quarter master; John Bowen, Adjutant.

Vessels Engaged in Monckton's Expedition.

Rig.	Name.	Tonnage.	Master
Sloop	Prosperous	75	Joseph Bragdon
"	Molly	77	John Doggett
"	Elizabeth	97	Nathaniel Mulberry
"	Victory	92	William Roderick
Schooner	Leopard	88	Thomas Church
Sloop	Endeavour	84 Irwett
"	Dolphin	73	Nathaniel Herryman
"	Sealower	81	Samuel Harris
"	Swan	84	Jonathan Lovett
"	Mermaid	82	Samuel Lincoln
Schooner	Neptune	100	William Ford
Sloop	Industry	86	George Goodwin
"	Victory	77	William Grow
"	Hannah	—	Richard Adams
"	Three Fiends	64	Thomas Curdis
"	Yorke	87	Nathaniel Preble
"	Endeavour	—	James Nicholls
"	Phoenix	—	Nathaniel Littlefield
"	Jolly	40	Jonathan Davis
"	Sally and Molly	—	James Farrington
"	Fortuna us	—	John Clapp
"	Bideford	—	Benjamin Daniel
"	Ranger	—	Francis Perry
Brigantine	Swallow	—	William Hase
"	Falmouth	— Pote
"	Pegasus	—	Nathaniel Malesm
Schooner	Molly	—	Nathaniel Gordon
Sloop	Endeavour	—	Edward Bacon
Schooner	Grayhound	— Hodgkins
"	Merrimack	—	Samuel Coverley
"	Laurence (with Monckton and Seal.)	—	Hector Macneil

On the 26th May they reached Annapolis, where they were joined by four small vessels, and the fleet, 41 sail in all anchored off the Joggins on the 1st June. On the following day they proceeded to Galop's Cove, at a point of land lying between the Missiquash and La Planche, where the disembarkation took place without opposition; and by seven in the evening the troops were safely lodged in and about Fort Lawrence. The next day was devoted to landing the stores, but early on the 4th, the Provincial Regiment, reinforced by 250 regulars marched towards Fort Beausejour, taking on the way, after a spirited resistance, the blockhouse at Point de Bute. The interesting details of the fall of Beausejour are beyond the scope of these notes, and indeed afford ample material for a separate paper. Briefly, the siege was at once begun in due form, and on the 16th June the Governor, M. de Vergor, surrendered, marching out with the honors

of war. It may be here said that he fell into disgrace on this account, but was subsequently restored to favour, having been cleared of the accusations made against him. With reference to Beausejour, the Governor of Louisbourg represented to the Minister on Nov. 10th, following that he had heard nothing against M. D. Vergor, who "made a stout resistance considering the circumstances both as regarding the fort and the number of the garrison." Four years later this officer was wounded and taken prisoner at Quebec, when commanding the guard on the heights escalated by Wolfe.

Having arranged by letter for the surrender of Gaspereau, on June 18th, Monckton directed Colonel Winslow commanding the 1st battalion of Governor Shirley's regiment, to parade 500 men in marching order at 10, a. m., with the following instructions. It will be observed that Beausejour had already received its present name:

FORT CUMBERLAND, JUNE 18. 1755.

SIR, — I have exchanged terms of capitulation with the officers of the fort at Gaspereau, which are the same as granted to Mr. Vergor and his fort. You will therefore, Sir, march with the party ordered, taking with them what provisions they have, and in case you should want more, I will either send it to you from here, or you may supply yourself from what you find at Gaspereau: they are to have carts supplied them to transport their baggage. For which purpose I enclose you an order to the inhabitants, likewise some proclamations which you will give them. You will, as soon after your arrival as you can, send me an account of the conditions of the fort and of the King's magazine, and whether there are any stores in it, remaining there till further orders. I am Sir, your most obedient humble servant.

ROBERT MONCKTON.

To Colonel Winslow, Commanding in Camp.

(P. S.) I send Mr. Goddard [the engineer] with you, case he should be wanted, and must desire that you take particular care that your men don't plunder.

Colonel Winslow's diary tells the story of his march:

"18th June 1755. Pursuant to the foregoing orders, drew up detachment of 500 men ordered, and march off from the parade at eleven o'clock, having with me, Major Frye, Captains Adams, Osgood, Perry, and Gilbert, Mr. Goddard, Engineer, Dr. Whitworth, and divers subalterns, with French pilots. Stopped at two by the side of a brook, refreshed ourselves and set forward. Came to the Misaquash River at about three miles off the Bay of Vert, where the French had a fine bridge across, but now demolished, which retarded us some till we could lay a new one, which we accomplished and marched on. All the way a good cart road, tho' wet; the land for the most part very good till we came near the Bay, where it grew worse. Passed through the village at Bay Vert, arrived at the fort about sunset, immediately entered and took possession. M. Ville-ray, commands. with about thirty regulars and some artificers and marched out. The latter part of the day proved rainy."

On the 19th when reporting to Monckton, he described the fort as being 180 feet square, having four bad blockhouses, a ditch partly dug, and an inferior palisade, but no rampart or glacis. He found a large storehouse in bad condi-

tion, with no floor, and the other buildings untenable. "No water but what was in tubs set in the ground." He concluded by recommending that the fort should be dismantled.

The following warlike stores and provisions were found there :

4	Guns,	4 pounders.	8	Hogsheads Molasses.
4	Guns,	2 pounders.	5	Barrels Peas.
2	Swivels.		6	Barrels Flour.
2	Gun Carriages.		230	Barrels Pork.
7	Barrels Powder.		3	Barrels Tallow.
1	cwt. Musket Balls,		10	Gallons Lamp Oil.
1300	Round Shot.		9	Dozen Cod Lines.
50	Cartridges.			

The diary continues :

"19th June. Ordered a party of 200 men to proceed to the village of Bay Verte, to make search for M. Le Loutre's chest and papers, said to be lodged at Abbe' Menac's, where being arrived and made search, found nothing of any consequence, and informed by the inhabitants that both the priests went on the same day that Beausejour surrendered, by water, and took with them all their effects, but whether they were gone to Canada or to the Island of St. John, they could not tell. This village contains about twenty-five houses, a chapel, and priest's house well furnished, and the inhabitants of this village live in better form, and more after the English manner than any I have seen in this Province, and have an open communication with the Island of St. John, and the inhabitants of Cape Breton, whom they furnish with lumber, Indian goods, etc., and from whom they receive all the conveniences of life in return."

"20th. Afternoon. Ordered a party of 200 men with whom I reconnoitred the country along by the side of the River Gaspereau. Found the soil but mean to what it is at Chignecto, and fish in the Bay scarce."

On the 23rd Colonel Winslow, being relieved by Captain Speakman, with 200 men marched back to Fort Cumberland. Colonel Winslow an active officer, was shortly afterwards engaged upon an unpleasant duty in the execution of which he displayed humanity and discretion.

Among the list of Officers of the 1st battalion of Governor Shirley's regiment, will be seen the name of John Thomas, who acted in the double capacity of lieutenant and assistant surgeon. Dr. Thomas also kept a journal of the proceedings of the expedition, in which are noted several incidents of interest that occurred in the neighborhood of Sackville. He was sometimes at Gaspereau as the following extracts will show.

"27th June, 1755. Pleasant day, wind S. W. Lieut. Carter came from Gaspereau, Lieut. Lewis of the Rangers, likewise. They measured the road and find it 15½ miles from Fort Cumberland to Fort Gaspereau."

"8th July. Half after 5 a. m., I marched with Major Preble, Captain Stevens, Lieut. Herrick, Mr. Philips (chaplain), two regular officers with a party of 50 men from the camp to Fort Gaspereau. We marched 9 miles, then

halted at a large bridge, refreshed ourselves at a French house near the river, then marched to a village at the Bay of Vert. Refreshed ourselves at one Jaco Morel's house, who is one of the principal inhabitants of the village. This was about 11 o'clock, a. m. Then we pass over a causeway one and a half miles in length, come to the Fort Gaspereau. It is situated on a point of land which runs down the Bay. It is near 10 leagues from the Island of St. John. By the French account this chop of the Bay abounds with clams, oysters, lobsters, eels, mackerel, etc, and in some seasons of the year with all sorts of sea fowl, geese brant, swans, in very great plenty, the timber on the land chiefly fir. Captain Cobb at present commands this Fort with Captain Jones and 180 men. It is built with pickets, 4 blockhouses, one in each corner of the fort, the whole ground that it contains is 190 feet square, store house and barracks for 200 men."

"9th July. Pleasant day. About 8 o'clock a. m., I amputated a leg for one William Thairs belonging to Captain Cobb's company, his native place was Brantrey. After the operation was over all the gentlemen and party that came with me returned to the camp. I remained at the fort in order to take care of the man who had his limb amputated. Capt Cobb and I went to the village about 7 of the clock in the evening to see a Frenchwoman, sick. Returned to the Fort at 9 o'clock."

"10th Rainy. Wind N. E. I went to the village again p. m., to visit some French that were sick."

"25th I lodged at Fort Lawrence. Lieutenant Wilson [He lies buried in the fort] came from Gaspereau, brings an account that one of Capt. Cobb's men was killed passing from the fort (Monckton) to the village on his horse. Both he and his horse were killed. His name was Whitcomb, he came from Hardwick. Colonel Monckton ordered Major Bourne out with 200 men to Gaspereau to enquire into the affair."

"27th Pleasant day. Mr. Philips preached all day. Major Bourne returned to camp, and supposes the man aforementioned was killed by the Indians from the Island of St. John."

In the small burying ground of Fort Monckton, where from the encroachment of sea, bleached human bones are exposed to view, may be seen the grave of the man Dr. Thomas mentions. The stone bears the inscription: "James Whitcomb, killed by the Indians 24 July, 1755."

"15th Aug. Captain Jones came in from Gaspereau. Brings us an account that some of the party which marched from us to Cobigate and Ranshak had arrived to Gaspereau with two vessels which they had taken from the French in a harbor as they were bound for Louisburg with cattle and sheep."

"3rd Sept. Major Frye returned with his party and brought us the account of his defeat (at Petiteodiac by Boishebert), and the wounded, among whom was Lieutenant Billings, badly wounded through in the arm and body. A party likewise from the Bay of Vert under the command of Captain Gilbert, who had been and consumed that village, and the houses adjacent."

"27th Sept. This morning 200 men marched for Gaspereau under the command of Major Frye. Doctor Tyler went with them."

"6th Oct. Captain Jones came here [Fort Cumberland] from Gaspereau with 40 men."

Here follow some interesting notes of military operation in the neighborhood of Sackville, but no further reference to Fort Gaspereau appears in Dr.

Thomas' diary; and it is probable that Major Frye who marched on Sept. 27th with 200 men to Fort Monckton, remained there in command until the following spring. Colonel Winslow had already left on Aug 16th for Minas, and Dr. Thomas proceeded to Halifax on Dec 1st. In August Governor Lawrence had written to Colonel Monckton, fixing the strength of the garrisons for the coming winter as follows:

For Fort Cumberland	500 men.
For Fort Lawrence	100 "
For Fort Gaspereau	200 "

The garrison for Gaspereau corresponds to the party marched out by Major Frye, who apparently remained on the Isthmus, for in 1760 he was in command of Fort Cumberland, as appears in the report of the Dominion Archivist, [List of documents at the Ministry of Marine in Paris]. "Feb. 6th 1760, Articles of submission made and entered into by M. Menack, priest, Francois Arsenau, Abraham Duguz, Michael Bourg and Paul Le Blanc, for themselves and on behalf of the French residents of Miramichi, Richiboucto, Bouctop, Memramkouk, and Petkoutiak, to Joseph Frye, Esquire, Colonel commanding the English garrison at Fort Cumberland." In April 1756 the Governor of Louisbourg reported to the French Minister of War that Forts Beauséjour and Gaspereau had been closely beset by the Indians during the winter.

Another tombstone in the burying ground records that Sergeant Mackay and eight men were killed and scalped by the Indians in 1756, while bringing firewood into the fort. In the same year a lieutenants' party of 30 men was surprised and several lives were lost. It is not clear whether both the accounts point to the same disaster or to different incidents. Two places are shown as scenes of ambushade; one at Indian Point on the shore of the bay, the other on the road to Port Elgin at a short distance from the fort. Near the first, a stone arrowhead has been picked up, while other Indian weapons have been found in the neighborhood. That constant petty warfare was carried on against the garrison is certain, in fact the service of fatigue parties became at length so dangerous, that on Sept. 15 1756 the governor in Council determined to abandon the smaller forts, Lawrence and Monckton, and to strengthen Fort Cumberland by their garrisons, assigning for reason that the French and Indians lurking in the woods never failed to fire upon small parties. Murdoch says: "On the 26th April 1756, Lieutenant Bowen was out from this fort with a party of 30 men, in order to get wood. They were attacked by a body of Indians, who killed and scalped nine of the men and wounded another."

In that year Boishebert, whose force in 1757 was one hundred Acadians and 250 Indians, made a descent upon Baie Verte, killing seven Englishmen, and taking one prisoner, besides burning a vessel of 200 tons upon the stocks, and a schooner lying at anchor. Whether this occurred before or after the garrison was withdrawn does not appear.

Although Governor Shirley's regiment was raised for one year's service only, and that the particular expedition upon which it embarked, it has been seen that Major Frye of the second battalion remained, to become governor of Fort Cumberland in 1760. It is probable that others remained with him attracted by the fertility of the soil and the prospect of obtaining grants of land. A single instance is known.

There came to Newburyport in 1754 from Plymouth in Devonshire, three brothers named Goodwin. One of them Daniel Goodwin, attached as scout to Capt Adams' company of Rangers, of Winslows' battalion, remained behind also as one of the garrison of Fort Cumberland, where afterwards most of his children were born.

This progenitor of the numerous race of the name residing in the vicinity of Baie Verte, is traditionally said to have been the first Englishman to cross the Isthmus from Fort Lawrence to that place, hence it is supposed that he was the bearer of Monckton's letter summoning Villeray to surrender.

That the quality of the land about Chignecto was observed and appreciated by the members of the expedition, is evident from the diaries of Winslow and Dr. Thomas. It is not therefore unlikely when the immigration to Nova Scotia from New England took place in 1763, that some of Shirley's regiment may have returned to settle in the neighborhood of the forts they had assisted to capture.

Inscriptions at Fort Monkcton. (June 1, '91)

JAMES WHITCOMB,
KILLED BY INDIANS,
JULY THE 24TH, 1755.

INCREASE ROBINSON.
DIED OCT'R. YE 5TH, 1755.
AGED 28 YEARS.

NATHANIEL HODGE.
DIED SEPT. 1755.
ÆT 32

HERE LYES YE [BODY]
OF SERJT. MACKAY,
& 8 MEN KILL'D [AND]
SCALP'D BY YE INDIANS
IN BRINGING IN FIRE]
WOOD [FEB 26] 1756.

HERE LIETH YE BODY OF
CAPT. JOSEPH WILL[SON].
WHO DIED OCT. 9TH, 1755.
AGED 50 YEARS.

NOTE: Joseph Allen of Cape Tormentine, now about 77 years of age (whose grandfather was present at the taking of Fort Beausejour) says that his father, many years after the occurrence, saw at Baie Verte the Indian who killed James Whitcomb, and who related the particulars of the affair.

It appears that the Indian lay in ambush on a wooded knoll in the marsh since called Birch Island, and as Whitcomb rode by from the village, where he had been sent for milk for the Fort, bade him stand and he would give him good quarter. The soldier refused to surrender whereupon the Indian shot him.

YORKSHIRE SETTLERS.

CHARLES DIXON.

The following paper was read before the Chignecto Historical Society on 9th July 1892, at the celebration on the Dixon homestead of the 120th anniversary of the landing of Charles Dixon at Sackville, by his grandson, James D. Dixon, Esq.:

To the ridge of land upon which we stand belongs perhaps as much of historic interest as any spot in Sackville. Upon it once stood a row of tenements erected and inhabited by the Acadian French. As the French gained access by water conveyance to the country threading the various rivers and streams in boats and small vessels, and as at this point the upland extends to the river which, with a single exception it does not do upon the whole length of the Tantramar, thus affording exceptional facilities for landing, I deem it more than probable they first landed and commenced their occupation of Sackville at this point. The marsh land to the Eastward now called the Dixon Island marsh, to the extent of 200 acres and upwards was reclaimed, occupied and cultivated by them from which they derived their principal means of support. Traces of these tenements were distinctly visible 50 years ago. Frequently in my youthful days I have ploughed over their foundations and turned up quantities of the marsh mud of which with a few sticks, their chimneys were constructed. There was also to be seen a hollow or depression of the surface indicating the existence of a cellar. In 1765 this locality was granted by the Nova Scotia Government to one Daniel Hawkins and was by him occupied and improved until the year 1772. Hawkins was one of the New England immigrants who were induced to come here by Governor Lawrence of Nova Scotia.

One hundred and twenty years have passed since Charles Dixon, one of the first of the Yorkshire immigrants, who

were induced to come to Nova Scotia by the influence of Lieutenant Governor Franklin, arrived and settled upon this farm, with his family consisting of his wife and four children. We are met to day to celebrate events of historic interest and importance, rather than for the purpose of glorifying individuals, yet it may be well that we should not overlook or under estimate the difficulties to be surmounted and the privations endured by these English immigrants, in bidding adieu to old England and encountering a rough and tedious passage from Liverpool to Halifax of nearly seven weeks duration and from thence to Fort Cumberland in which nearly three more weeks were spent. Mr. Dixon found a refuge for his family in the Fort for a couple of weeks, and employed his time in exploring and visiting the neighboring localities and in the purchase of the property upon which we are assembled of Daniel Hawkins, to which he removed his family on the 8th of June 1872. The property consisted of 2,500 acres in all, about 260 of which was in this immediate locality and 186 acres of which was marsh, nearly all of which was dyked and 35 acres of improved upland. There was also included a farm of 200 acres and upwards on the lower Mill creek or Frosty Hollow, so called, 20 acres of which were cleared and upwards of seventy acres was dyked marsh. The balance of his purchase consisted of 2000 acres of wilderness land nearly 700 of which lay on the lower Fairfield road to the south-west. For this property he paid the sum of 260 pounds sterling. He also purchased the stock upon the farm which consisted of 13 cows, 6 oxen and 25 young cattle, six horses, 36 sheep, 13 hogs and 2 goats. A house and barn and some out houses stood upon the property very near where the house of the late Captain Towse now stands. There was also a house and barn on the farm at Frosty Hollow and about 20 head of stock which was under rental to one Daniel Dickinson. To this land where

we are assembled he gave the name of Patmos Isle. Mr. Dixon himself was not a farmer and had never followed that occupation. The spring he arrived here was late, cold and discouraging. He says he found almost the whole population, who had come here from New England some seven years previously much discontented and desirous of selling their lands and returning to New England. He strove to ascertain the cause of such universal discontent and soon arrived at the conclusion it was due to indolence and ignorance. Accustomed as he had been to notice the agricultural operations of Yorkshire, perhaps at that time the most advanced, of any part of England or even of Europe, the milder and cruder operations which here met his observation could not but suffer by comparison. It is but reasonable to suppose the New Englanders with their seven years experience with the soil and climate of this country, should have acquired a more correct general knowledge of the country and its capabilities than a stranger, who had no practical knowledge of agricultural pursuits could be capable of forming with only a couple of weeks observation. Here, however he applied himself diligently to the cultivation and improvement of his estate in which he was assisted the first year by Thomas Anderson who with his youthful bride were his fellow passengers from England. It is said of Mrs. Anderson that upon their arrival at Halifax, she was so homesick she earnestly desired to return to England in the same ship. A year later Mr. Dixon writes a paper recording the circumstances of his early life, his occupation, his religious views, his marriage, the reasons inducing him to leave England and his coming to America and his settlement here concluding with the words following "and now let us adore that Providence that has brought us through many dangers from our Father's house and given us a lot in a strange land and an inheritance which we never deserved nor expected." Between 1772 and 1777 a considerable number of other families from Yorkshire came out and settled in Sackville and adjoining localities, some of whom were encouraged to do so by Mr. Dixon while some were aided and assisted by him in procuring

suitable locations for settlement. The loyalty of these English immigrants was almost immediately put to a severe test by circumstances connected with the revolutionary war, and the fact that so large a proportion of the New England settlers here, actually sympathized with the revolted Colonies. But to the honor of the Yorkshire settlers be it said, they were almost a unit in adhering to the cause of Great Britain, though for a time they suffered the indignity of having their houses robbed and pillaged, and themselves forbidden to stir off their premises.

To a man like Charles Dixon this was a terrible humiliation. His loyalty to the crown and government of England was intense; he could not conceive of anything so foolish and wicked as rebellion against such a government and such a King as George the third and his feelings towards such persons and their sympathizers were such that he did not wish his family to associate or intermarry with them in after life. Of the Yorkshire immigrants, it can safely be said they were honest, moral, industrious, and loyal citizens, very plain spoken, when they said yea or nay, whatever that implied could be relied upon. If they differed, as they sometimes did, they expressed themselves upon the points at issue with admirable directness and without prevarication. They did much to improve the condition of the country both morally and physically. I rejoice to be permitted to participate in any demonstration to honor their memory, and to declare my conviction that none of their descendants have any cause to be ashamed of their ancestry.

The first grant of the parish of Sackville comprised 35,250 acres all to New England people and was issued in 1765. A later grant must have been issued soon after, as an assessment of the land owners of Sackville was made in 1777 by James Law and Charles Dixon in which the quantity assessed is over 90,000 acres and in which there are many names of New England people.

The largest land holder in Sackville at that date was Samuel Rodgers, one of the most active participators in the Eddy war, so called, to whose name stands 4,746 acres. I recollect this old

man who died at a great age in 1831 or thereabouts, having been for several years previously a town charge. The next largest proprietor of land were Esterbrooks and Mason, 3,344 acres. Next comes John Barnes 2,750 acres and next comes Charles Dixon with 2,510 acres. Elijah Ayer 2,090 acres and Edward Barron 2,000 acres, Benjamin Emerson 2,000, Robert Scott 2,000 and others with a less quantity. Of the 120 persons who were proprietors of land at that time there are not more than 25 surnames to be found on our assessment roll of the present year, corresponding to those in the list above mentioned. Thus we see that the names of nearly all the landed proprietors of 1777 have removed from the country or become extinct.

Mr. Dixon as a Justice of the Peace, to which office he was appointed soon after he came to the country, was authorized to perform the marriage service. A large number of licenses are yet to be found among his papers. A few may be mentioned as follows, viz.:—David Wheaton and Mary Barker in 1793; John Harper and Mary Thornton in 1791; John Dobson and Mary Fawcett in 1794; William Lawrence and Sally King in 1795; Michael Grace and Ruth Comforth in 1792; Thomas Easterbrooks and Ruth Smith in 1793; James Hicks and Sarah Easterbrooks in 1785; John Wry and Phoebe Maxwell in 1786. Bedford Boultenhouse and Charlotte Harper in 1794; Timothy Lockhart and Elizabeth Teed in 1793.

THE OLDEST DESCENDENT

of Charles Dixon now living is Mr. Nelson Bulmer in his 86th year. Mr. Bulmer's father George Bulmer purchased his property of Nicholas Cooke, a son of one of the original grantees of Sackville in the year 1785 and immediately settled thereon. The adjoining property to the northeast was owned by William Maxwell and was transferred to his son-in-law, John Wry, next to Wry Thomas Bowser settled, and next to him Robert Atkinson, who purchased his property from his father-in-law,

Amasa Killam. These four lots comprised all the land between the Upper and Lower Fairfield roads with the exception of a half lot which was purchased by John Richardson. This block of land now constitutes a very valuable and populous part of Sackville, embracing the Mount Allison institutions, the English, Methodist and Baptist churches, hotels and private residences, stores and public buildings including the post office "that is to be." The Dixor estate also contains a fair proportion of the natural growth and increase of the population and buildings of Sackville. The oldest surviving descendant of Charles Dixon bearing the name of Dixon is William C. Dixon, of Maidstone, Essex Co., Ontario, who though in his 79th year is here present. There are fourteen of the grandchildren of Charles Dixon still living, eight bearing the name of Dixon, and two the name of Bulmer and four females bearing the names of O'Hara, Wightman, Simons and Smith. The descendants, over 2000 in number are widely scattered and are to be found in Australia, California, South Sea Islands, Japan, England, in many of the States of the Union and in nearly all of the provinces of Canada.

At the conclusion of his interesting paper Mr. Dixon read a letter from his cousins Charles and Edward Dixon and their sisters Ruth, Martha and Mary of Payson, Utah, expressing regret at their inability to be present at the celebration and also extending to their relatives in the east an invitation to visit them should the occasion offer.

Shortly before the gathering broke up Mr. Wm. C. Dixon of Ontario, read an amusing poem appropriate to the occasion in which was set forth many historical and personal episodes of the early settlers. Among the historic relics exhibited were a spider used for heating flat irons etc., a walnut tea tray, a clock of very early make, an account book kept by Mr. Dixon the first entry in which bears date of 1760.